

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-2, 4-12, 14-25, and 27-32 have been resubmitted. Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 12, 14, 25, and 27 have been amended. Claims 13 and 26 have been canceled. New Claim 33 has been added.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 10, 25, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bates (U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,500). The Examiner has also rejected Claims 12 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hosan et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5,131,615). Finally, the Examiner has rejected Claims 11 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bates and Hosan et al. individually, as applied to claims 1 and 12, respectively, and further in view of Stoll (U.S. Pat. No. 4,280,741).

The Examiner objected to Claims 2-9, 13-17, and 27-30 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated that Claims 2-9, 13-17, and 27-30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Finally, the Examiner allowed Claims 20-24, 31, and 32, for which the Applicant thanks the Examiner.

Bates

Bates discloses a slide bearing having an assembly of slide pads compressively mounted within a housing to bear upon a centrally inserted pipe. Compressive force against the pads is provided by a plurality of compression elements 4, which are described as "compression springs although it will be understood that solid or suitably formed compressible plastics or rubber material could be used." (col. 3, lines 16-18). These compression springs are best understood from the disclosure as helical compression springs as seen in Fig. 1. These compression elements 4 are described as being "secured by nipple

elements 7 which include a shoulder portion to engage or secure the elements 4 to the annular member 1." (col. 3, lines 19-21).

It is apparent from the figure and the written description that the compression elements 4 of Bates are helically wound coil springs that are spaced longitudinally along the inner wall of the annular member 1 extending along its length, and that the shoulders of the nipple elements 7 are intended to fit within the circular end of said compression elements 4. Furthermore, Bates does not suggest, teach, or disclose the use of an elastomeric material between the inner wall of the annular member and the pads.

The applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the limitation of "a wave spring" (Amended Claim 1, line 4). The compression element of Bates is a helically wound **coil** spring and not a **wave** spring, within the meaning of the Applicant's specification. Therefore, since Claim 1 contains a wave spring that is not taught, disclosed, or shown in Bates, then Bates cannot be used to maintain a §102(b) rejection. Accordingly, Claim 1 as amended should be allowable. The Applicant has amended Claims 7-8 to depend upon Claim 1. Since Claims 3-11 all depend upon Claim 1, then they should be allowable.

The applicant has amended Claim 25 as follows: "providing a resilient force exerted by a device selected from a group consisting of a helically wound wave spring and a combination of a second spring and an elastomeric base material, through said bearing pad onto said shaft;" (Amended Claim 25, lines 7-10, emphasis added). Bates does not suggest, teach, or disclose either a helically wound wave spring by itself or a combination of a spring of any kind and an elastomeric base material. Therefore, Claim 25 contains an element not taught by Bates and a §102(b) rejection cannot be maintained. Claim 26 has been canceled. Since Claims 27-30 depend upon Amended Claim 25, then they should be allowable if Claim 25 is allowable.

Hosan et al.

Hosan et al. discloses a chair column having a gas spring cylinder extending axially through a "guide unit 4, which consists of a receiver bush 5, a bearing bush 6 and a radially elastic ring member 7 arranged therebetween." (col. 4, lines 37-49).

The Applicant notes that Hosan et al. does not teach, suggest, or disclose the use of a spring embedded within an elastomeric base material.

Applicant has amended Claim 12 to add the limitation of "a spring between the outer shell and the bearing pad, the spring providing a resilient force through the bearing pad onto a shaft when the shaft is installed in the bearing" (Amended Claim 12, lines 4-6). Since this limitation is not suggested, disclosed, or taught by Hosan et al., a 102(b) rejection of Claim 12 and Claim 18 (dependent upon Claim 12) cannot be maintained. Therefore, Claims 12 and 18 should be allowable. Since Claims 14-19 all depend upon Claim 12, then they should be allowable if Claim 12 is found to be allowable.

Stoll

Stoll discloses a mechanism for supporting a piston rod within a cylinder head, consisting of a bearing bushing 20 receiving a piston rod 16. The bearing bushing 20 is described as being composed "for example of a sintered material, a plastic material of low sliding friction, bearing bronze or a different suitable bearing material" (col. 2, lines 36-39). The bearing bushing 20 (pad) is supported by "a sleeve 18 of elastic material, for example of rubber, ... arranged between the bearing bushing 20 and the wall of the through opening 12, which sleeve encloses the bearing bushing 20." (col. 2, lines 39-42).

However, Stoll does not disclose either the use of a spring, or the use of a spring in combination with an elastomeric material, to maintain a resilient force against the bearing bushing 20.

Applicant's Claims 11 and 19 depend upon Claims 1 and 12, respectively, which contain the limitations of "a wave spring" (Claim 1, line 4), and a combination of "a spring between said outer shell and said bearing pad" (Claim 12, line 4) and "an elastomeric base material interposed between said outer shell and said bearing pad" (Claim 12, lines 7-8), respectively. Either one of these devices, i.e. the wave spring and the combination, is used to maintain the resilient force. Since neither Stoll, Bates, nor Hosan contain either of these limitations, then the use of Stoll for the proposition that a lip to provide a wiping action on the shaft during movement between the bearing and shaft cannot be used to maintain a §103(a) rejection, and is thus moot. Claims 11 and 19 should also be allowable.

CONCLUSION

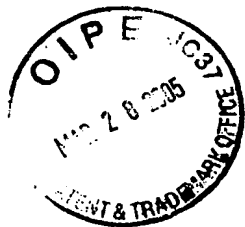
Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Office Action with respect to Claims 1-12, 14-19, 25, and 27-30 is hereby requested. Applicant submits that claims 1-12, 14-25, and 27-33 are now in condition for allowance.

In the event the examiner wishes to discuss any aspect of this response, please contact the attorney at the telephone number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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